NUMB. I.

# THE PLAIN DEALER.

*To be* Continued *every* MONDAY *and* FRIDAY.

——— *Hoc eſt*
*Vivere bis, Vita poſſe priore frui.* MARTIAL.

MONDAY, MARCH 23 1723-24.

WHEN a *Stranger* comes into Company, the Whiſper goes round, *Who is He?* and the Face each Man wears, is the Effect of his Information: You ought therefore, to know, who I *am*, that you may regard what I *ſay*; and then, it is to be hop'd, we ſhall converſe without Jealouſie.

I AM a talkative *Old Batchelor*, in my grand Climacterick, of a ſanguine Complexion; well-limb'd, ſtrong and hearty; in Stature more than midling; my Face is round and ſmooth, my Fore-head high and open, my Eye-brows are widely arch'd, my Teeth ſound, and white; I have a Noſe a little *Aquiline*, Eyes black and ſpritely; my Hair is brown and ſhort, but ſomewhat of the thinneſt, with a Silvering of Grey among it: I wear my Cloaths plain, am a great Lover of Walking, and go commonly alone; I carry a pair of Mouſe-colour'd Gloves in one Hand, and my Oaken Stick in the other, inſtead of a Cane; for I am naturally partial to the Manufactures of my Country, and an irreconcileable Enemy to the *Eaſt-India Company*.

MY Father, who was one of the *Cavaliers* of the laſt Century, had a *Daſh* in his *Temper*, of what his Miſtreſſes called *Surly*; but he was of frank Heart and ſimple Manners. There was an unlucky kind of Contraſt in his Diſpoſition, for he was Amorous, but Unpoliſh'd: He ſeems to have been rather Serious, than Witty; yet he lov'd Wit in others, and was particularly charm'd with the Wantonneſs of Mrs. *Behn*. That arch Baggage has made bold, in her Comedy, called the *Rover*, both with his Name, and his Character. —— Whoever has ſeen *Ned Blunt*, has ſeen, not the *Copy*, but the very *Life* of my Father.

HE left me an Eſtate, rather moderate than plentiful; which I have neither improv'd, nor diminiſh'd. I was naturally diſpos'd to Quiet, and affected to think calmly: For this *Reaſon* I have obſtinately reſiſted MARRIAGE. I paſs my Summers at *Blunt-Hall*, the ancient Seat of our Family, in the dirtieſt Part of *Suſſex*: My Winters I enjoy in Town, where I am the oldeſt Member now alive of an Aſſembly, of both Sexes, very numerous and diverſified: We meet, twice a Week, at the Houſe of a ſober Widow, whom we placed there on Purpoſe. But, becauſe I delight in Study, and am an Enemy to the Faction and Flutter of the Polite End of the Town, I have my Lodgings in a low-built, ſilent Houſe in the City, which has a large, ſhady Garden, and covers the very *Spot*, where, of old, as *STOW* tells me, ſtood the Watch-Tower of *Barbican*.

IT has always been my Cuſtom, To keep a daily Account, in Writing, of my Actions and Obſervations, even to Particulars of no ſeeming Importance. By Help of theſe Notes, I live over again my paſt Time, and learn Wiſdom from my Follies. —— I have lately been reflecting, and taken it ſtrongly into my Fancy, That, wanting Children of my own, I ſhould be Every Body's Father: I have ſo many Things to ſay, and am ſo naturally fond of *Teaching*, that I promiſe to my ſelf no ſmall *Fame*, from the Succeſs of my Weekly Counſel: The SUBJECT of my PAPER gave me little or no Pain: My Propenſity to Talking required, That it ſhould be *General*, and *Unboundedly Copious*; But the NAME was a *Difficulty*, that *I* could not eaſily get over: That *Large* Part of Mankind, which conſiſts of SUPERFICIALISTS, judging every Thing by Appearance, *taſte* but coldly of a Meaning which is not *dreſs'd* to their *Reliſh*; and the *Will*, that is too ſtubborn to bend to the *Fancy*, ſhall hardly be able to work upon the *Underſtanding*.

[Price Two-Pence.]

THIS Doubt was so knotty, that I submitted it to the *Assembly*, where a learned *Clergyman* spoke first, and was for calling it the INQUISITOR; He was honestly proceeding to give his *Reasons* for that Name, but was shortly interrupted by an *Alderman's* Wife, who, with Eyes full of Fire, and Face as red as her Ribbands, told him, *That, however the* Inquisition *might agree with* His *Principles, it would never go down with* honest *People and* Protestants:— *If you desire,* (said she to me) *That your* PAPER *should be read by the* Friends *of the* Government, *you should give it a* sober *Name, and call it the* TRUTH-TELLER.

A pert *Coquet*, who sate next her, a Toast, and a great Fortune, burst into a loud Laugh; *Oh! Heavens!* cry'd the Gipsey, *I shall faint at the odious Formality of that* Title! *Ah, Madam! How could you be so unreasonably mistaken! The* TRUTH-TELLER!—*Lord, deliver us! why, the* COURT *can never bear it! and all the* gay World *will despise and abhor it!* —— *No, no, if you wish your* PAPER *to* Spread *and grow* Publick, *you have nothing to resolve, but to call it the* SECRET.

FOR *my Part*, answered a grave Virgin, about Fifty, *I think they would do well to entitle it the* COQUET; *There's scarce a Fop in Town but would be fond of that Name; for he would consider the* PAPER *as his* Property.

A famous *Critick* interposing, Remark'd, *That the* Taste *of the Age was so vitiated, that no Name could be acceptable, unless it were* Musical; *and the* Wind, (says he,) *of Modern Arguments, being an Over-match for their* Weight, *I am for calling it the* BAGPIPE: —*Oh! much rather the* FLUTE, *reply'd the* Coquet; *The* BAGPIPE *is so filthy, so horrible an Instrument! that 'twould be impossible to bear the Sound of it, unless 'twere introduc'd in an* Opera.

A *Justice* of the *Quorum*, my next Neighbour in the Country, and an eminent *Fox-hunter*, maintain'd with invincible Strength, both of *Voice* and *Authority, That it ought, by all Means, since it was intended for* Society, *to be called the* GOOD-FELLOW; But he bow'd, and chang'd his Mind, when our *Alderman's Young Daughter*, who sate at her Mother's Elbow, blush'd, and whisper'd in his Ear, *That for her Part, she could think of no Name, that would be so pretty, as the* SWEET-HEART.

AN *Old Maid* of the Widow's, to whom, for Pleasantry-sake, we indulge the Familiarity, and Privilege of Impertinence, had been standing all this while behind her Mistress's Chair, and broke out, on a sudden, with an Air of Amazement; *Hey Day! if you must* whip *it about thus, and keep it constantly spinning, the best Thing you can do is, To call it the* WHIRLIGIG. All the Company laugh'd at the Wench's Conceit, 'till the *Critick*, assuming a surpriz'd and decisive Air, assur'd us, positively, *It* must *take; for that No Body could fail to expect as much Wit, at least, in the* WHIRLIGIG, *as in the* What-d'ye-call it.

I was unsatisfied with All This; and having a natural Partiality to my own Character, I bethought my-self of the PLAIN DEALER. The whole Assembly agreed in Approbation of That Name, and gave it, as their Joint-Opinion, *That, Whether it would be generally* liked *or no, it was never more generally* wanted.

THE *LADIES*, when they hear, That my Design is PLAIN DEALING, will consider me perhaps, as an Old-fashion'd-Fellow, who can have nothing to do with Them; yet I know they will be frequently kind enough to furnish me with Business, and I shall handle them, as often as they allow me Opportunity.— The CHURCH and the STATE I have no great Genius for medling with; They are either *well* as they *are*, or will never be the *better* for any Thing I can *say* to them. But the *Passions*, the *Humours*, the *Follies*, the *Disquiets*, the *Pleasures*, and the *Graces* of *Human Life*, All these I claim a Right to consider as my Subjects; and shall treat on them, without Prejudice, in the most frank and open Manner; so that the *Watch-Tower* of *Barbican* shall again resume its Use, and *overlook* this Antient CITY, for Her *Service*, and Her *Safety*.

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